

Remarks

Claims 1, 3 and 4 are amended.

Claims 1-11 are pending and are under consideration.

The claims are amended to limit some of the components of b). The alkali metal or alkaline earth metal is limited to sodium and the activator is limited to tetramethylethylenediamine.

Support is found in original claim 4 and working Example 2 on page 11 of the disclosure. TMEDA is shorthand for tetramethylethylenediamine as in the first paragraph of page 5 of the disclosure.

No new matter is added.

Applicants note with appreciation that claims 6-9 are found allowable.

Claims 1-5, 10 and 11 are rejected under 35 USC 102(a) as being anticipated by Schisler, et al., *Phosphorus, Sulfur and Silicon*, 2002, Vol. 177, 1447-1450.

Claims 1-5, 10 and 11 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Goerlich, et al., *Zeitschrift fuer Anorganische und Allgemeine Chemie*, 1994, 620(1), 173-176.

Claims 1-5, 10 and 11 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Diemert, et al., *Phosphorus and Sulfur and Related Elements*, 1986, 26(3), 307-320.

Claims 1-5, 10 and 11 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Ionkin, et al., *Izvestiya Akademi Nauk, Seriya Khimicheskaya*, 1992, (3), 726-730.

Claims 1-5, 10 and 11 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Borm, et al., *Journal of Organometallic Chemistry*, 1986, 306(1), 29-38.

Claims 1-5, 10 and 11 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Rausch, et al., *Synthesis and Reactivity in Inorganic and Metal-Organic Chemistry*, 1985, 15(7), 923-943.

Claims 1-5, 10 and 11 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Jutzi, et al., *Journal of Organometallic Chemistry*, 1985, 287(1), C5-C7.

Applicants submit that only the Jutzi reference discloses tetramethylethylenediamine (TMEDA). However the present sodium/TMEDA is not disclosed.

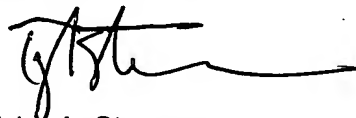
In view of the present amendments, Applicants submit that the 35 USC 102(a) and 35 USC 102(b) rejections are addressed and are overcome.

Applicants kindly request the Examiner to reconsider and to withdraw the present rejections.

Applicants submit that the present claims are now in condition for allowance and respectfully request that they be found allowable.

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Respectfully submitted,



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